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Profile Report



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Wisconsin School Health Education

Profile Report: Physical Education Teachers

for

Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction

by

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Introduction

BACKGROUND

The School Health Education Profile (SHEP) health teacher questionnaire was developed by the Division of Adolescent and School Health, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in collaboration with representatives of state, local, and territorial departments of education and health. These surveys were designed to help state and local education agencies to monitor characteristics of and assess trends in health education in middle/junior high school and high school.

The first SHEP questionnaires were conducted in a sample of Wisconsin middle/junior high schools and high schools in 1994. The questionnaires were administered again in 1998, 2002, and 2004 by the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI). These health reports provide statewide data representative of all public middle school and high schools regarding health education curriculum and other health-related school policies.

The source for SHEP data: www.dpi.state.wi.us/dpi/dlsea/sspw/shepindex.html.

METHODS

All regular public secondary schools serving at least one of the grades 6 through 12 were included in the school sampling frame provided by the DPI. Systematic probability sampling with a random start was used to select schools for the survey. Schools were sorted by estimated enrollment (from DPI enrollment records) in the target grades within the school grade level (middle schools, high schools, other) prior to sampling. For each of the 425 regular secondary public schools included in the sample, principals, lead health teachers, and lead physical education teachers were asked to complete a questionnaire.

In Wisconsin, a total of 313 out of 425 (response rate of 74%) principal questionnaires and 317 out of 425 (response rate of 75%) lead health teacher questionnaires were received and included in the analyses. Additionally, a total of 304 out of 425 (response rate of 72%) lead physical education teacher questionnaires were received and included in analyses. Findings for this report are based on the data gathered from completed questionnaires and represent Wisconsin public secondary schools.

Data are presented in five major topic areas in this report related to physical education, including: Standards, Curriculum, Instructional Time, Assessment, and Promoting Physical Education. Selected key questions are highlighted in each of these topic areas, followed by a brief discussion section.

Wisconsin Physical Education Survey Results

NATIONAL AND STATE FITNESS TRENDS

Obesity is now considered to be national epidemic. The number of people who are overweight has doubled in the last 20 years.¹ Physical inactivity and unhealthy eating habits have been identified as two of the leading contributors to becoming overweight or obese.² These lifestyle behaviors increase the risk for several chronic diseases: heart disease, some cancers, stroke, diabetes, hypertension, arthritis, and depression.³

Relevant Youth Behaviors	National	State
At risk for becoming overweight	15%	14%
Currently overweight	14%	10%
Students trying to lose weight	44%	47%
Participated in insufficient vigorous physical activity*	37%	37%
Participated in insufficient moderate physical activity**	75%	72%
Students exercised to lose weight or to avoid gaining weight	57%	42%
*Vigorous physical activity is defined as exercising or participating in physical activities that make the participant sweat or breathe hard. The recommended amount is at least 20 minutes of activity on three or more days a week.		
**Moderate physical activity is defined as participation in physical activities that do not make the participant sweat or breathe hard. The recommended amount is at least 30 minutes of activity on five or more days a week.		
2003 Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System		

The above information was collected through the 2003 national and state Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS). This self-report survey is conducted every two years and monitors health risk behaviors among adolescents. Twenty-four percent of students in Wisconsin identified themselves at risk for, or currently, overweight; 47% have reported they are trying to lose weight.⁴

Physical activity is deemed an important factor in maintaining healthy weight. Unfortunately, 72% of Wisconsin students reported they were not participating in sufficient moderate physical activity.⁴ This statistic is alarming and demonstrates the need for students to participate in regular physical activity.

Fifty-seven percent of students from the national sample and 42% of Wisconsin students recognized the role exercise can have in weight management.⁴ It is encouraging to see that students know that exercise can be used to assist in weight loss or management, but it is unclear as to whether or not students fully comprehend how exercise should be incorporated into their daily lives. Today's physical education programs are positioned to and should be providing students with such knowledge and skill development.

How Do The Standards Measure Up?



STATE STANDARDS

Leading an Active Lifestyle

Physical Development

Learning Skills

Understanding Physical Activity &
Well-being

Health-enhancing Fitness

Respectful Behavior⁵

NATIONAL STANDARDS

Motor Skills and Movement Patterns

Understands Movement Concepts

Participates Regularly

Health-enhancing Fitness

Responsibility and Respect

Values Physical Activity⁶

Over 80% of the physical education teachers reported they use the Wisconsin Physical Education Standards, as well as their district's guidelines to assist in the development of curriculum and instruction. Although only 44% of physical education teachers use the National Association for Sport and Physical Education (NASPE) Standards. It is important to note that the Wisconsin Physical Education Standards were adapted from the NASPE Standards, which suggests that Wisconsin physical education programs are aligned with the national framework.

<u>Curricular Material</u>	<u>Middle</u>	<u>High</u>	<u>Combined 6-12 grades</u>	<u>Overall</u>
National Association for Sport and Physical Education Standards	48	40	41	44
Wisconsin Physical Education Standards	85	81	73	81
Your district's curriculum, set of guidelines, or framework	87	86	87	87
A commercially-developed physical education guide	20	16	25	20
Fitness test materials (e.g., Fitnessgram or Presidential Fitness)	85	72	75	78
Adaptive physical education materials and equipment	53	48	41	49

Numbers reflect the percentage of "yes" responses reported by physical education teachers. 2004 Wisconsin SHEP

PHYSICAL EDUCATION CURRICULUM

<u>Knowledge and skills taught</u>	<u>Middle</u>	<u>High</u>	<u>Combined 6-12 grades</u>	<u>Overall</u>
Improving physical fitness	99	94	96	96
Using fitness center equipment	58	78	73	69
Providing adventure education experiences	46	37	35	39
Using low/high ropes course	27	27	11	22
Increasing personal responsibility	94	87	90	90
Increasing respect	96	88	93	91
Applying health knowledge	94	91	87	90
Providing physical fitness testing	93	78	79	84
Providing lifetime sports such as golf	75	88	82	80
Providing fitness experiences such as mountain biking and rollerblading	44	51	47	47

Research shows that as age increases physical activity greatly decreases.³

Numbers reflect the percentage of "yes" responses reported by physical education teachers.

2004 Wisconsin SHEP

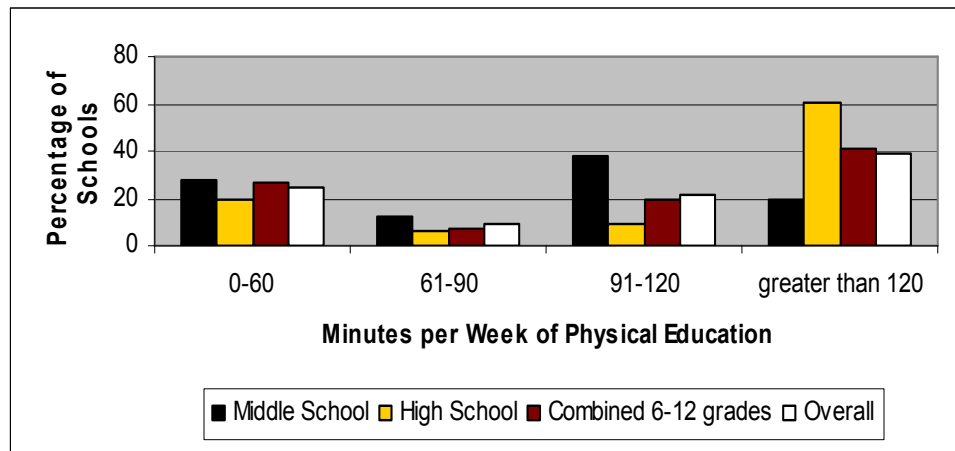


What's Being Taught?

Eighty percent or more of the physical education teachers who completed this survey reported they teach students knowledge and skills that were related to the areas of: physical fitness, personal responsibility, respect, applying health knowledge, physical fitness testing, and lifetime sports.

The areas of least instruction were: adventure education and using low/high ropes courses. This lack of instruction may be due to the high cost for implementing these topics. However, adventure education programs and low/high ropes courses tend to reach a broad range of student interests and needs. Additionally, these areas incorporate a great deal of intrapersonal and interpersonal skill development promoting the holistic health needs of all students (e.g., decision-making, communication, and cooperation). Furthermore, it has been suggested that enjoyable opportunities be provided for students in hopes of creating lifelong interest in movement.⁷ If students become excited about an activity they may continue to participate in it for a lifetime.

INSTRUCTIONAL TIME



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Are Students Receiving Enough Movement?

Just over 60% of high school physical education teachers reported that students receive greater than 120 minutes of instruction time per week. While, the greatest percentage of middle school physical education teachers (38%) reported that students receive 91-120 minutes of instruction per week and only 20% of students receive 120 or more minutes. Over the last five years, instruction time has remained the same in 79% of Wisconsin school districts, although 14% reported a decrease.

The data is unclear, however, as to how the minutes were distributed and raises the question of how frequently (e.g., daily or twice per week) students were provided with the opportunity to engage in movement. To obtain cardiovascular benefit, it is recommended that “children and adolescents engage in at least 60 minutes of physical activity on most, preferably all, days of the week”⁸. Therefore, it is suggested that physical education programs provide a minimum of 3 vigorous movement experiences or 5 moderate movement experiences per week for students.

Some states allow various school activities (e.g., athletics or marching band) to be substituted for physical education requirements. This idea creates concern for the quality of movement education students receive, due to the lack of an instructional component. It is evident that Wisconsin values formalized movement education experiences for students, since 99% of the school districts reported that they do not allow these types of substitutions.

National Health Objectives

“increase to $\geq 50\%$ the proportion of adolescents who participate in daily school PE”

“increase to $\geq 50\%$ the proportion of adolescents who spend at least half of school PE class time being physically active”⁹



ASSESSMENT

Does Wisconsin's Assessment Measure Up?

Student participation, skill development, and written tests are reported by physical education teachers to be the most common forms of assessment. These three areas have been traditionally utilized within physical education programs as a means to determine student achievement.

As noted in the previous section, 90% of physical educators are teaching their students about the importance of personal responsibility. In terms of assessment, however, only 62% of PE teachers reported having students assess themselves as a part of their evaluation. Perhaps by encouraging students to be more involved in their own evaluation, this will assist them to become better independent learners, thereby promoting personal responsibility. The Fitnessgram is an assessment tool that provides students with feedback about their fitness level and includes suggestions for improvement.¹⁰ Therefore, physical educators are encouraged to consider using this assessment technique.

Another evaluation method that may be useful to promote autonomy for students is the use of rubrics. Yet only 53% of physical education teachers are using them. Physical education teachers are encouraged to utilize a variety of assessment methods to meet the diverse needs of their students and promote their holistic development. Allowing students to occasionally select evaluation approaches that best match their learning style (e.g., portfolios, demonstrations, or individual projects) will support their overall development.

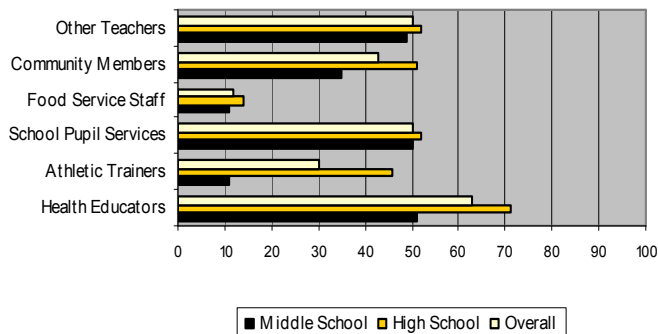


<u>Assessment Techniques</u>	Combined			
	<u>Middle</u>	<u>High</u>	<u>6-12 grades</u>	<u>Overall</u>
Graded participation and involvement	100	93	99	96
Demonstration of skill	95	81	90	88
Written tests on certain units	86	84	82	84
Skills tests on sport components	84	74	73	78
Fitness goal setting and management	60	61	63	61
President's Challenge	55	43	69	53
Self-designed fitness test	42	44	47	44
Fitnessgram	30	27	14	25
Using self evaluation	66	60	62	62
Using rubrics	56	53	47	53
Using individual projects	32	47	47	42
Using group projects	42	40	37	41
Using portfolios	15	26	14	18

Numbers reflect the percentage of "yes" responses reported by physical education teachers. 2004 Wisconsin SHEP

PROMOTING PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Collaborative Partners



2004 Wisconsin SHEP

One way to promote physical education is through collaborative relationships. Wisconsin physical education teachers reported that they work primarily with health educators, followed by school pupil services, other teachers, and community members. Sixty-one percent of physical educators identified that activity programs were provided to students during evening and weekends (e.g., open gym and community walks). These efforts serve as a means to develop school and community partnerships, which help promote physical education.



<u>Parent and Community Involvement</u>	Combined			
	<u>Middle</u>	<u>High</u>	<u>6-12 grades</u>	<u>Overall</u>
Provided families with info about PE program	63	55	52	58
Met with parent organization (e.g. PTA/PTO)	17	16	10	15
Invited family members to attend PE class	36	24	24	29
Held parent seminars on PE related issues	5	6	1	5
Held joint physical education and activities for parents and students	18	9	11	14

Numbers reflect the percentage of "yes" responses reported by physical education teachers.

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Are We Advocating?

To gain support, physical educators must become actively involved in advocating for their profession. Only 58% of physical education teachers reported that they were providing information to parents about their programs. And, all other areas of advocacy noted in the above table were reported below 50%. Physical education teachers are, therefore, urged to take a stronger role in advocating for their programs. Such advocacy efforts must become a priority if they are to gain, or continue, support for their profession.

Advocacy Activities to Consider

- Consistent communication with parents throughout the year (e.g., send class updates home and implement family fitness nights).
- Periodic communication with community members (e.g., submissions to school newsletters and local newspapers).
- Join and participate in state and national professional organizations (e.g., Wisconsin Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation, & Dance and National Association for Sport and Physical Education).
- Take notice of relevant legislative issues for the profession.



Conclusions & Recommendations

CONCLUSIONS:

- Obesity rates are higher than ever before. Poor dietary habits and physical inactivity are behaviors that have been linked to this critical health issue.
- The majority of teachers reported using a district curriculum and the Wisconsin Physical Education Standards as a guide for instruction.
- Physical educators stated that long established curriculum content areas (e.g., physical fitness and lifetime sports) receive high levels of implementation, while adventure education programs receive little attention.
- Most students are receiving at least 91-120 minutes of physical education per week. However, it was not determined how many times per week students participated in physical education.
- Traditional methods of assessment were reported as the most commonly used among Wisconsin teachers (e.g., student participation, skill development, and written tests).
- Based on physical education teacher responses, there is a lack of advocacy occurring.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Since health habits are established at early ages, the physical education profession is in a pivotal position for equipping students with the knowledge and skills needed for a healthy future.
- Physical education teachers must continue to use the state standards as their curriculum framework. Additionally, they need to incorporate these standards into instruction.
- To meet the needs of all learners physical educators are encouraged to consider teaching a broader range of content areas (e.g., adventure education, cooperative learning, and low or high ropes courses.)
- Students should be receiving a minimum of at least 60 minutes of physical activity on most, preferably, all days of the week.⁸
- Teachers should use multiple methods of assessment to meet the needs of diverse learners.
- Using a national fitness assessment measure such as the Fitnessgram will be helpful in guiding physical education decisions.
- Advocacy efforts are absolutely essential and everyone must be actively involved in promoting the profession.

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